

A Little Farm

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Summary: You've heard stories about the creature before you; monstrous tales of death, destruction, and the slaughtering of your people. This man; Master Chief, does not fully fit the description your people used. First off, he doesn't have the wings and horns of a demon, to your complete amazement. You, Arbiter, are very confused by this human. Please R&R!

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****Fandom: Halo (Specifically, Halo 3)****

****Pairing: Master Chief/The Arbiter****

****Description: You, Arbiter, feel that now that you've met the long fabled 'Demon' of your people, that maybe, just maybe, your records need to be updated. Because this tall, odd, awkward SPARTAN is most surely not the long forsaken Demon. Correct?****

****A/N: I've been working on this one for some time, and finally got it done. PS, this is all Second Person POV, starring The Arbiter and Master Chief traveling together on Earth during Halo 3. Also, to blame for alot of this, I read Of Mice And Men awhile back in English Class and got very emotional over it, so this somehow happened. Please R&R!****

****...****

You've heard stories about the creature before you, monstrous tales of death, destruction, and the slaughtering of your people. This man; Master Chief, does not fully fit the description your people used. First off, he doesn't have the wings and horns of a demon, to your complete amazement. You, Arbiter, commanding general of the fleet

that was meant to protect the first Halo, are very much confused by this human. He doesn't treat you like a monster, as the other earthlings have; he treats you like any other soldier in his squad. Currently, you, Master Chief, and several men are searching the area for escaped Floods, but everything has toned down and the marines are getting restless. A few have taken to playing card games together, even daring to let a few Elites join in on it.

You listen to your Elite soldiers and the human soldiers as they chatter on about home life, about what they'll do after the war. You look to Master Chief; the man you never expected to work with and trust, and notice that he stays with you rather than join in on any games with his men. Eventually, all that's left outside in the humid air is you, Master Chief, and guards for the camp that're far enough away where they can't spy on you. Chief is quiet, helmet still on. He glances around, not meeting your gaze before he reaches up and unlocks his helmet, pulling it off. You hold your breath, eyes wide as he removes the armored top of his suit. He's young, younger than you thought. He has short, brown hair that looks untamed and shaggy, yet it suits him, along with his violent green eyes that remind you of the grass on your home planet.

"About time those boys left... that helmet drives me nuts." Chief comments, placing the green helmet to his side as he stares at you, pulling on a small smirk as he notices you staring. "Expected something different?" He asks.

Yes, you were. You were expecting a demon who ripped Covenant heads off for fun, a creature who never slept, a man who knew no peace in his rest. You instead got a demon-like creature who respects all soldiers of all races, a creature who sleeps curled up like a child, a man who seems to let every barrier fall when without his armor. But you don't say any of those things to Master Chief, instead, you shrug, and decide that you'll just have to get to know this side of the Chief, the one he keeps locked behind a green helmet and yellow visor. After a second, you snap back to reality at the sound of a branch breaking. You swing around, Covenant Carbine locked and loaded to fight off any incoming Floods. Instead, you look up at Master Chief, who had somehow slipped past you to grab what you now recognize as what the earthlings call a Coke.

He tosses you a matching can of the substance, plopping down next to you with a soft thump. "I'd give you a beer... but there's no telling when a Flood might show up, can't be drunk for war." He explains, leaning back onto a log right next to you, your armor nearly making contact. "So... what're you doing once this war is over and done with?"

You think about it, you could always go home to your mother and take care of her in her older age, you could get married to a female Elite soldier and start a family, you could even travel to your home planet again. But none of those options are what you tell him. "I'm going to retire from wars." You tell him, not even looking in his general direction. "I'll leave the Covenant planets behind, might live on Earth if they'll take me, anything to escape the lies of my people."

"I understand." Master Chief says, leaning in towards you just the smallest bit, so that his unarmored head rests somewhat lazily on your side. "I'll live on Earth too... get a farm maybe. I'll get tons

of animals... maybe a dog. I always wanted a dog, growing up as a kid. They never let us get any pets while the tests went on to make us SPARTANS, we were used for one purpose after all; to be the perfect super soldiers."

You shrug, hardly noticing how Chief seems to keep getting closer to you until he's practically in your lap. "Maybe I'll join you for that, a farm sounds intriguing... we could build a little coop, get a few of those earth chickens."

Chief nods in agreement. "I'd make us the house, collect firewood at night in autumn, so we'd have plenty by winter. And when winter comes around with snow storms, we'd just sit inside by a roaring fire and listen to world radio. We'd say 'Fuck it' to work and relax, never worry about ammo and war again."

"I'd work the gardens." You explain, placing your Coke product aside since you won't drink it either way. "I can even grow us some of the Shanghelli plants if you'd like; they'd taste great, a few can even grow just fine in the winter months."

"Only if I pick the dog breed." Chief says, resting against you like a cat. "I'd get us a Border Collie or a German Shepard, I love those."

You chuckle, tempted to tell Chief to move, but he seems too peaceful to be moved. You remind yourself that he hasn't slept since you all found him two weeks ago, how he stays up all night, watching over his soldiers like a wolf. He must be tired, you tell yourself, allowing the smaller man to rest in your lap for awhile. If anything happens, you can wake him up. "All you're interested in is the dog, aren't you?" You ask.

Chief shrugs, biting back a yawn. "Cats are great too." He adds. "We'd get cats, they can kill any mice in the barns at night. I'm only interested in dogs because there was one in my earliest memories from childhood."

"Was it your dog?" You ask, leaning back more into the log as you bite back a loud yawn, noticing that Chief is starting to nod off, but keeps trying to stay conscious.

"I think so." He tells you, slowly removing himself from your lap and leaning against you instead; he must've felt he was doing something wrong. "My mother was in the memory too... all I remember of her was that she was nice, and oddly enough smelled like soap. She kept telling the dog to stop coming near me, called him Dusty."

You shrug in reply, rolling over. "I think that's enough for tonight." You say, eyes staring at the darkness of the forest as you refuse the urge to sleep. "Go to sleep, Chief. You need it more than anyone." You then go silent, waiting to hear the sound of Chief snoozing.

He doesn't sleep that night; but neither do you.

...

The morning is humid and moist, making for a lot of complaining marines and very uncomfortable Elites. You yourself are suffering in

this horrible heat, seeing as the Shanghelli planets are typically very warm and dry compared to Earth. You rub your face, trying to feel any coolness cover your sweat soaked skin, but nothing seems to be helping. Master Chief is indifferent to the heat, but you easily spot how goddamn exhausted he is. Eventually, you and Chief have to separate from your squad. You hadn't wanted to, but a flash fight with the Flood had caused you and Chief to take drastic measures. You had ended up paired with him, everyone else was either dead, a Flood, or missing.

You follow behind Chief as he walks ahead, easily maneuvering through the dense jungle while you struggle through it, trying to be quiet and cool off all at once. After another few minutes of shuffling through forestry, Chief curses a few times under his breath, looking around with more irritation in his stance than ever, probably losing his patience by now. You're tempted to calm him down, to try and rest for a moment, but this is war, and the only rest in war is for the dying and the dead. Chief looks around, trying to find a way-point on Cortana's location; the AI unit you both recently discovered might just be on Earth. Chief stops, suddenly shaking as he grips his helmet, breathing heavily.

This isn't the first time he's done this around you, he's been having these sudden stops and shaking moments ever since you and Johnson found him. You're concerned about it, but Chief always says that he's fine and doesn't need any help from you. He keeps muttering things, things that disturb you to some level and make you feel that Chief may need serious medical assistance/therapy. Of course, on your planet, therapy is a sticky grenade to the face, but you're pretty sure that the humans wouldn't take too kindly to seeing Master Chief die, even if you did argue that he was slowly losing it. You return to the present as you see Chief lean on a tree, obviously recovering from the violent event.

You repeat the question you've asked every time he does that. "Are you alright?"

"I'm fine." He says, it's almost like a tradition for him to say that now. "Let's keep moving; we need to find Cortana."

"You need to rest." You counter sternly, stepping forward and placing a surprisingly gentle hand on his shoulder, holding the man steady. "We can't save her if you keep having these flashes."

He shrugs your hand off, trying to walk more ahead of you. You roll your eyes as you silently load a tranquillizer dart into your Covenant Carbine. It pains you a bit to do this, but Chief's stubbornness leaves you little choice. You point it at the back of his helmet as he's distracted, investigating an empty cave structure. "I'm sorry, Chief. But you've left me no choice." You pull the trigger, watching as Master Chief is instantly unconscious from the blow.

You hoist him over your shoulder; he might be smaller than you, but Jesus Christ, you were NOT born to carry SPARTANS around. "Maybe next time you'll learn to shut up and sleep." You mutter darkly, but it doesn't hold as much venom as you expected it to. You head into an empty cave awhile later, hoping to make camp there for the night, or even a few days if Chief doesn't come to by tomorrow afternoon.

You have a feeling that it'll be a long week ahead of you.

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You're getting attached.

That much is certain to you as you glance from the fire, back to Master Chief, who's helmet you pulled off along with most of his armor to leave him in a thin layer of his under suit. He seems rather peaceful while sleeping, eyes shut lazily while curled up like a human child. He reminds you of what the marines explained as a cat, but you have no idea what a cat truly is; you hope that it's furry and dangerous like those marines said. You glare at Chief, silently blaming him for being so... you don't know the word.

'Attractive?'

You're going to pretend that you never thought of that, ever.

"Why are you so annoying, Demon?" You ask aloud, glaring at Chief, tempted still to kick the SPARTAN awake. But you know that releasing your anger on him will do you no good. "Why'd I even become attached to a creature like you? A female Elite would've been far less complicated. But no, I get you instead. Damned human."

Chief doesn't respond, still snoozing quietly. You sigh darkly, rubbing a hand unconsciously through the man's chocolate colored hair, ignoring the nice tingle that runs up your spine from the contact. "I could do so much better. I could marry a beautiful Elite woman; she'd be a soldier, not a damned human. We'd have children together, tons of them, they'd grow up to be the best soldiers the Shaghelli has ever seen. But no; I'm stuck with nothing but a lousy human who can't even walk a mile without getting into a fight."

You continue to rant on and on about how worthless you think Master Chief is, how much better you could do than him, but you always end up at square one; he still means something to you. You hate that about Chief, he's pretty anti-social, yet he has millions of comrades who adore him. He's sarcastic as fuck; yet all generals seem to respect him. He could blow up half the human fleets and they'd say it was an 'honest mistake'. Chief is a hero to his people; you are a heretic to yours. You're both opposites, yet you're the same. Opposite sides of the same coin.

"I hope you get eaten by the Flood." You mutter, still brushing the Chief's hair softly and delicately. "I hope you go bald and die of some kind of human cancer. I hope you fall off a cliff and no one misses you." You stop, finally staring down at Chief, who's still unaffected by your words. "But... I might miss you..." You lean down and kiss his forehead, drawing back quickly and glaring at the cave wall.

Whenever you look back down at Chief; he's still asleep, but at least he's smiling.

"I hate you so much." You mutter in response to this. If you could pout, you would.

...

After two days, Master Chief doesn't wake up. You at first brush it off, telling yourself that he'll be up and at it in no time. After a week though, you start to really worry. You've run into few issues, having to take on a few hoards of Flood alone, but otherwise you've been pretty okay. You stay close to the cave at all times, never leaving the boarder you've made around the area to search for food, in-case something happens to Chief. Eventually, you stop leaving the caves all together, having enough food to last you at least three weeks if you need it.

You spend your hours of free time pacing and guarding the cave, sometimes trying to distract yourself. You start by counting seconds, but after awhile that becomes too monotonous for you. Then you count the rocks in the cave, that gets old faster than the counting of seconds. After only a day and a half, you start counting bullets, the food packs, health packs, and gun cleaners. You're starting to lose it, but you figure you've got at least a month or two before you try anything crazy to wake Chief up.

You tried shaking him awake after three days, but he stayed sullen in peace. You tried slapping him and kicking him in the sides, but that only resulted in minor shuffling and muffled groans, never ending with Chief waking up. Finally, you started shooting bullets in the air after a week and a half. You jolt in amazement when Chief wakes up, groaning in pain as he barely opens his eyes, gazing at you worryingly. His skin is starting to look paler than before, really showing off his freckles, his eyes have large bags under them, too.

"Got any water?" Chief croaks out, groaning very, very quietly as he rolls onto his back, rubbing his head.

You nod, unscrewing a bottle of water and handing it to Chief; he chugs as much as he can down before handing it back, still looking ill. "Are you alright?" You ask, almost expecting the same responses as his panic attacks resulted in.

Chief doesn't even hesitate. "No." He admits, rubbing his stomach as he keeps turning over, never comfortable on the stone floor of the cavern. "I feel like shit... probably 'cause we never got vaccinated before we came here... other marines might have this too." He coughs loudly and painfully, you feel a bit bad for him, which is ridiculous in your mind.

"You need a medic." You state, moving to help Chief up.

Chief starts to stand on his own, without your help, leaning heavily on the wall of the cave. He collapses, breathing heavily. "Shit." He mutters, still attempting to stand.

You force him to sit against the wall, both hands on either of his shoulders. "Stay down, Demon. I'll get your armor; we'll get you to a medic soon enough."

"No." Chief says stubbornly, pushing you away as he yanks on his helmet roughly. "We need to find Cortana... who knows if she's okay..."

"She would want you to find shelter." You try to argue, hoping that a bit of guilt will keep Chief's stubborn nature at bay. "She'd give you Hell if you came to her in your condition; I'll get you some help, just trust me."

Chief gives you an odd look, even under the helmet you can almost imagine him quirked an eyebrow lazily at you. "Why should I trust you? We'd kill each other if it weren't for our common enemies." He points out.

"That is true, Demon. But know this; we're on the same team now. Race no longer matters, only destroying the Covenant and stopping Truth does. Once this is done, I have no doubts that the Human and Covenant war will continue. We'll be on opposite sides once more. But I can't let you die like this; you need to survive for your people." You explain, you're kind of making this up as you go, but you hope to God that it makes sense to this Demon.

Chief pauses, looking you in the eyes. "... Why do you want me to live? You could easily kill me right now; I can't fight back against you like this. You could say it was a Flood, say I died of sickness, even say you had no other choice. They'd buy it."

"First of all; no, they'd never believe me. If you died, I'd be murdered for that. Secondly... we still need to start that farm, don't we? You wanted a Border Collie?" You ask, smiling almost at the sickened Chief.

"Or a German Shepard, don't forget the Shepard." Chief says, probably smiling under that helmet as he allows you to start helping him into the SPARTAN armor. "Fine. Do what you want; but if Cortana dies... you can kiss that Shanghelli garden goodbye."

You can't help but chuckle as you help Chief onto your back after he's in his armor, starting to leave the cavern carefully in search of the other Elites and marines. "Let's go." You say, hurrying through the dense forestry. "We've got a long way to go to find the others."

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"Hey, Arbiter?" Chief asks after awhile, peering at you from over your shoulder.

"Yes?" You reply, barely jumping over a small riverbed. "What's wrong, Demon? Have you located any Floods?"

Chief shakes his head, relaxing against your back softly. "No... I think we need to shorten your name is all. I'm sick of calling you Arbiter; it needs a nickname. Like how everyone calls me Chief even though I'm John-117."

"Your name is John?" You ask; if you had eyebrows one of them would be raised in questioning. "I thought your real name was really Master Chief."

"That's not the point." Chief says, breaking the subject quickly. "How about... Arb? No, that'll get old way too fast... how about Arby?"

You glare at the road in front of you. "Are you serious?" You ask, still running.

"Think about it, it fits you so well. Wouldn't you agree, Arby?" Chief asks, the damned man is probably smirking under that helmet.

"If this catches on..." You begin, growling darkly.

"It'll be great; everyone can call you Arby. Don't you like it, Arby?" He asks.

You glare at him, shaking him wildly for a second, making him groan in pain. "No, I don't." You say, smirking when Chief kicks your leg weakly. "Can't you think of anything better to do than talk endlessly up there? How about scouting, or sleeping, either is fine by me."

Chief sighs, resting his head against the back of your neck; his breathing is weak and strangled. It only now occurs to you that he's been trying to play off just how sick he really is. "It'll be fine." He assures you softly, not looking up as he rests against you. "We'll find the other soldiers soon enough."

For awhile, all is quiet, and it's not long before you feel Chief sleeping again, his heartbeat softly drumming on your armored back. "I have no idea why I keep assisting you, Demon." You say, apparently continuing whatever argument you'd been having earlier with his unconscious form. "I could leave you to die, maybe feed you to a damned Flood even. Yet I haven't... probably because I'd actually miss you... if you ever repeat that I'd miss you, I'll make sure everyone will call you Johnny for the rest of your SPARTAN life." You get no response, but you didn't expect one.

"I should just leave you here... my people would celebrate, it would be another check-box filled in for the war plans. I could see it now... odd how it isn't as charming as it used to be to imagine. And don't say 'because I'm not in it', I already know that. If I hear one smart-ass remark out of your mouth, I'll shove a Carbine up your ass and twist it eighty times!" You promise loudly, yet Chief remains asleep; either he's a heavy sleeper or he's enjoying this too much to say a word in reply. "One of these days, I'll murder you. I'll kill you and bury you with Floods, wouldn't that be awful? ... you know what? Forget it, Demon. I need to stop talking to a brick wall." You eventually conclude, continuing on your lonely path towards possible rescue.

...

For the next two days, you and Master Chief travel around the dense jungle for help, with little results. You eventually find a great med kit and start treating Chief yourself, but you know that any real infections or wounds will need a professional medic's help. At least now Chief can walk. After only the first few hours, you two have started referring to each other as 'John' and 'Arby'. It's clear that Chief hates being called John for unknown reasons, and you don't like Arby one bit, but the names at least give you both something to latch onto and find in a way familiar and less direct. Even so, you're both well aware of everything around you as the hours turn to days. Chief refuses to be carried now; which is a relief to you, since carrying

him was a bit of a pain.

Even if Chief is up and at it, he still sleeps for hours upon hours when he rests, only awakening to leave the area, eat, drink, use the rest room, or jump at the sound of gunfire. You've both ran into fairly little trouble so far, which is a godsend seeing as Chief is still doing pretty shitty and you yourself have no idea how much longer you'll be able to stand the terrible weather of this planet before you contract a disease of some sort. Tonight, you sit by a small fire, not big enough to attract too much attention, but big enough to keep you and your younger companion safe and warm. It's a small comfort in the admittedly lonely little jungle. Your eyes gaze through the darkness, seeing that Chief is still awake, leaning on a broken log you and him had dragged over to the fire side awhile ago.

After a bit, he speaks. "It's rather quiet." He points out softly, his voice having lost a bit of it's usual coolness, replaced now with hints of normalcy that you cling to. "I wonder how the marines are doing? I wonder if Johnson is still alive... what do you think, Arby?"

You shrug, having after heard the name enough times that it's grown on you. "They're probably alright; they're well trained space marines after all." You explain, leaning back on your own log while looking your companion in the eyes. "My men will be fine as well; I wouldn't be surprised if they all came charging in at any moment."

As if on instinct, you both immediately start staring at the path you had pointed at while talking about the soldiers, as if just looking at the area will magically make them appear before you both. After only a moment, John stares at you, eyes full of a deep concern that you know has probably been plaguing him for hours or even days. "What if we're all that's left of our squad?" John asks, not breaking eye contact with you, his ivy irises bearing into your own yellow eyes. "If we're all that's left... we need to stop looking for survivors and re-focus on our mission, Arbiter." The seriousness in his tone is clear; he even forgot to call you Arby.

"We need to find them." You demand, standing up at full height. He copies you, but he's more than a head shorter than you, but to the two of you, the height difference is hardly even there. "If we leave them to the Flood... I'll never forgive myself, or you for that matter."

"I understand your concern." John says, re-entering the role of Master Chief so fast, you feel like you never got to say goodbye to John-117. "But this is war; war has casualties, Arbiter. If we lose our lives looking for corpses... they'll have lost their lives for nothing. We need to leave tomorrow morning. If you're not coming... don't bother waking me up; I'll wake up on my own and find Cortana without you."

"You're... leaving me?" You ask; you don't mean for it to come out so weakly and needy, but for God's sake, Chief seems to be implying something rather harsh to you. "I thought we were in this together, Demon!"

Chief nods, pulling on his helmet, replacing John with a steel wall. You, Arbiter, silently wonder how many times John has hidden himself

with the personality of Master Chief. "We're together for this, but clearly we have different viewpoints on this war. You want to go on a wild goose chase; I want to find Cortana and stop the Flood from killing every human on Earth. Now, I'll repeat myself; you either stay with me or be gone by morning. If you leave... I'll go find Cortana, then I'll go find you. Just... stay safe, if you decide to go that is." The last bit comes out in a way that makes you suddenly see what he's becoming; concerned for you. He's making a tough call, you can see that, he's not only putting men he's worked with on the line, but he's putting his own health and need for medical assistance on the line too.

"You still need help." You say, bringing back up the topic that's been lingering around for days between you two. "And to be honest, I'll be needing assistance as well."

"Are you joining me or not?" Chief asks, very clearly telling you how he feels about your question, giving you his answer very simply in a 'I-don't-care-if-I-die' sort of manner that bothers you to no end.

You sigh, looking away as you try to access your options. On one hand, you could very possibly tranquilize Chief again, but the effects could be dangerous, and in your current state, you're not sure if you can drag him around unconscious. You could maybe leave to find the marines and Elites alone, but you hardly stood a chance when Chief was out like a light days ago; you're not sure how long you'd last before a Flood got you... or something worse, if that's possible. Still... you could go with him; it would be the safest bet thus far. You turn to him, looking into that orange visor with a new found anger/understanding. You can tell that he doesn't want to do this, that he wants to find the marines and Elites, but you can also see that he's worried for Cortana; his close friend/AI Unit.

"Give me time to think, Demon." You order, laying down in the dirt to hopefully sleep and clear your mind.

Chief nods, taking a seat beside you as he seems to over-think his options as well. "I understand, just rest for awhile, I'll wake you up if anything happens..." He says, trailing off as he stares out into the dense, dangerous jungle.

...

You're both there in the morning, but that doesn't surprise you.

Of course, not alot can really surprise you anymore, Arbiter. You watch for a few minutes as the creature you once saw as a Demon scavenges around carefully, picking up any items you both might find useful on the torturous journey before you. Master Chief doesn't speak, but you don't mind all that much, you wouldn't expect much from a man like him anyways. After what feels like years of packing, Chief throws the last bag over his shoulder, cocking a shotgun he found awhile back as he adjusts himself, getting used to the added weight of the supplies.

You don't comment on how sick he was days ago, you don't tell him to relax and wait for help, you don't say a goddamn thing like that, Arbiter. "Let's go." Chief finally says, motioning for you to follow as he starts heading up a trail, the sounds of far off Floods now

easily heard, despite the considerable distance. "Those men died for us to continue; let's not let them down."

You nod, following after him with a few bags on your back, while an Energy Sword glows a mystical blue in your large, claw-like hand. "Coming, Demon." You reply, walking swiftly until you're both side by side in your stride.

Neither of you mention the millions of dead soldiers that have died to make this moment take place, neither of you discuss how exactly you might find Cortana, neither of you realize just how close you are to each other. All you both do is focus on the road ahead, silently agreeing that maybe, just maybe, if that farm bullshit comes true...

Chief is in charge of getting the dog., and you are in charge of the shitty space garden.

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A/N: Cheesy ending alright, but I really liked this drabble! Please R&R, please oh please! Will also be posted on AO3 with same title.

~Supercasey.

End
file.